2:Gamble S-5 (1926-1933) 1964 AF 12 North China AF 12

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WINNOWING GRAIN

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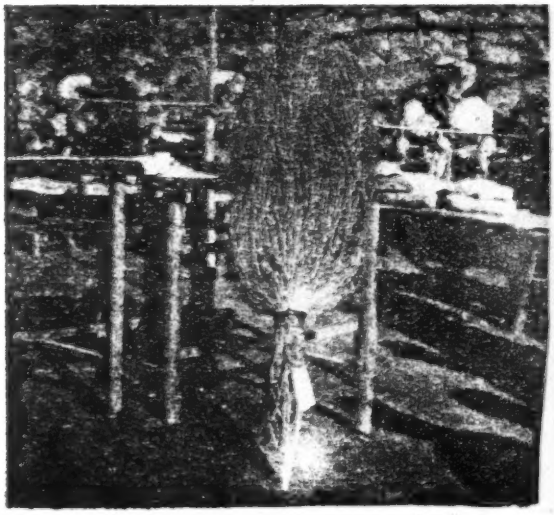

BROOM PLANT, PRESSED AND READY FOR USE

[p. 4 (d)]

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288 434 We could not find any reason that would explain why the 1933 index number was 167 for the annual wage, but only 86 for the daily wage; 125 for the highest ginning piece wage, but only 75 for the batting wage.

The yearly wage was 86 times the day rate in 1921, 175 times in 1927, and 167 times in 1933. During the 13 years covered by our figures there evidently was considerable improvement in the financial position of the yearly workers, at least when compared with that of the men who were paid by the day or on a piece-rate basis.

Cotton Spinning

286 463 Most Ting Hsien families had a spinning wheel as part of their household equipment. Most of the girls and a few of the boys learned how to use it. The girls usually began spinning when they were 12 or 13 years old. Ordinarily it took them some four or five months to learn. During that time they practiced on "red" cotton. A new spinning wheel cost about 50 cents.

All but 16 of the 453 villages, 97.5 per cent, had at least one spinning family. One-third of the spinning villages had not more than 20. Just under two-thirds, 61 per cent, had not more than 50. Three had more than 300 and one had 360. The total number of spinning families was 28,367, an average of 65 per village. Forty-two per cent of all the village families had at least one member who was making thread.

The total number of spinners was 39,720. Almost 95 per cent of these were females, as only 2,106 male spinners were reported. Twenty-eight per cent of the females over 14 years of age were spinning. Only 55 villages reported any male spinners. All but six of those villages and all but 231 of the male spinners were in the 6th District. Three villages reported that all their spinners were males.

In most of the spinning families more than one person was doing some spinning. The average for the hsien was 1.4 per spinning family. In the 6th District it was 1.9. In eight villages, seven of which were in the 6th District, the average was over 2.5 per family while in three villages, all in the 6th District, it was three per family.

283 It was generally estimated that the women would spin one catty of thread in five days or from one market day to the next. This was borne out by the figures for the 67 spinning villages in the 1st District. There the village average per spinner ranged from 10 to 134 catties but for more than half the villages the average was between 20 and 30 catties

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per spinner or a little more than one catty per market day for the winter months.

The thread markets, usually called the Dew Market, were held early in the morning and lasted only a short time, ordinarily ending before 10 o'clock. One explanation of the market's name was that like the dew it disappeared early in the day. Another was that the thread came to market with dew on it, for on the eve of the market the finished thread was usually wrapped in a handkerchief that had been soaked in water and then was left over night on the ground in order that the dampness might add to its weight.

The different thread markets used different weight units. In some a catty of thread was only 3.5 ounces of the generally used 16 ounce catty. In others the thread catty was 4.5 or 5.5 ounces. All our price and weight figures have been adjusted to the 16 ounce catty base.

The estimated output of thread in 1931 was 962,300 catties, an average of 34 catties per spinning family and 24 catties per spinner. At 57 cents per catty, the average price for 1931, the value of the thread was just under $550,000. The average value per worker was $13.80.

The average gain from spinning was estimated to be 21 per cent of the market price or 12 cents per catty in 1931. At that rate the average gain per worker was $2.90 per year. In the 4th District the average was only 87 cents per worker but in the 4th, 5th, and 6th Districts it was $4.00 per year.

It was reported that, while in 1931 the average gain was 12 cents per catty, fluctuations in the price of thread sometimes reduced the gain to as little as 2.5 cents per catty. In 1932 the average price of thread in six sample villages ranged from 37 to 50 cents and averaged 45 cents per catty.

For the different villages the average gain per spinner ranged from 29 cents to $100 per year. The latter was for two men in one family who evidently were full time spinners. To make that much their average output would have to be some 2.5 catties per day. There were 58 villages in which the reported average gain per spinner was less than $1.00 per year. Fifty-two of these were in the 4th District. There were only six villages in which the reported average gain was over $10.00 per spinner per year.

In our group of 1,220 home industry families (see Chapter IV) it seems probable that even in the families with the largest farms (in-

2: Gamble S-5 (1926-1933) 1954 . AF12 North China AF12

283 comes) more than 25 per cent of all the females and more than 38 per cent of the females over 14 yars of age were spinning. Forty-five per cent of all the females in that group of families were doing some home industry. In the entire group of families 52 per cent of the working females were spinning and it seems probable that in the wealthier families the proportion would be even higher as the women would b less apt to do the heavier work of other occupations.

283 461 It was estimated that, when working, just over one-quarter of the spinners worked less than four hours per day, just under 50 per cent worked from four to eight hours, and just under a quarter worked over eight hours a day. It was not possible to estimate the total number of days worked by the entire group, but in one village the spinners estimated that the days when they did some spinning averaged 101 days per spinner per year. Four spinners said they worked at least 250 days per year. About one-third estimated their time between 50 and 100 days, another third between 100 and 150 days. For some it was full time work. Others worked only occasionally during the winter months. The estimated spinning time averaged five hours per worker per day. The total output was 7,340 catties or just over 23 catties per spinner. As the average price for that village was 50 cents per catty, the average spinner produced thread worth $11.60 and earned a profit of some $2.30 per year. From the time and production figures it appears that the average worker processed just under one-half a catty of thread in a 10 hour day. The average gain to the worker on that amount of thread was five cents.

283 The locally spun thread was largely used for weaving so after spinning it was reeled into skeins, then washed, sometimes dyed, starched, and dried. The thread was then wound onto shuttle bobbins, or, if it was to be used for warp, onto other bobbins that were placed on the upright spindles of a wooden "bed" so that some 360 threads could be drawn off together for the warp of the local looms. If the thread was dyed the charge was two cents per catty.

Cotton Weaving

286 Cotton cloth weaving was reported by 378 villages, 83 per cent. The weaving families numbered 13,385, 20 per cent, and the weavers 39,121, just under 10 per cent of the village population.

The average number of weaving families per weaving village was 35.

2: Gamble S-5 (1926-1933)1954 AF12 North China AF12

Other Industries

The equipment for making sesamum seed oil cost some $22.10, a stone mill $14.00, two big iron pots $1.50, an oil pot $4.00, a big willow basket $1.00, two willow twig scoops $1.00, and a long handled gourd dipper 60 cents. One tou of sesame seed made from 6.5 to 7.0 catties of oil, worth 30 cents a catty in 1931. The oil cake was used for fertilizer and was worth $4.50 per 100 catties. 258

Pig bristle sorting was the second largest home industry, with an estimated annual output of some $760,000 and a gain of $95,000. Unlike spinning and weaving, which were almost hsien wide, the bristle industry was concentrated in two villages near the southern border of the hsien, nearly 10 miles from the railroad. The work was carried on by 80 families and 445 workers. Most of the 90 men were engaged in the buying and selling. The women did most of the sorting. It was a business that required the use of considerable amounts of capital, for the bristles were purchased in Shantung, Honan, Shansi, and as far away as the Three Eastern Provinces, shipped to Ting Hsien for processing, and then sold to purchasers from Tientsin for export. Some of the families were able to provide the necessary capital. Others borrowed the needed funds from the money lenders. 438 237

The bristles were washed, combed, and sorted into three sizes, top quality with lengths of from five to seven inches, medium quality from three to four inches long and lowest grade from one to three inches long. The prices ranged from $1.00 to $6.00 per catty with the medium grade price about $2.00 per catty. The bristles too short for export were used locally to help make water baskets and buckets water tight, for bristle rope, or for fertilizer. [241] [283]

A worker ordinarily sorted some 20 catties per day. Some of the sorters were paid on a piece work basis which averaged about seven coppers, 1.75 cents, per catty or about 35 cents for a day's work. The estimated gain was some 24 cents per catty.

Mat weaving, the fourth largest home industry, with an output of $361,400, was not as concentrated as the bristle sorting but it was reported by only seven villages, five of which were in the 6th District. Seven hundred and seventy of the 1,012 families lived in one village (see Chapter IV). It, quite naturally, was the chief mat market of the hsien. 285

Mat weaving required almost no tools but did require considerable

4: Burgess E-4, 5 (1926-1927) 1928 AF12 North China AF12

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effigies and other paper models used in connection with funerals. These include paper figures representing servants, mule carts and mules, horses, silver taels and coins. During the funeral procession these figures are burned, the current belief being that in this way comforts are assured for the departed.

*467 295

Shoe Fasteners—*Feng Shang Hsüeh Hsieh Hang* or *Shuang Hsien Hang* (Sewers of Boots and Shoes Guild or Double Thread Guild).

The work of these guildsmen is one of the processes in making Chinese shoes or boots. Members of another guild make the cloth soles of shoes; another guild is primarily responsible for assembling the different parts of the shoe into the finished product; and still another, for repairing shoes. The members of this guild sew the top of the Chinese shoe to the sole and sew across the front of the shoe. This work is for the most part done in their own little shops, but sometimes members of the guild may be found in the ordinary shoemaker's shop, employed to do this specialized work.

*467 283

Silk Thread Makers—*Ssü Hsien Hang* (Silk Thread Guild). Members of this guild may be seen working in the open spaces near the moat south of the Manchu City in Peking. Two racks composed of two uprights and a long cross piece about six feet from the ground are built from forty to fifty yards apart. While one of the workers strings the silk thread from one rack to the other and back again, another pushes back and forth a substantial piece of wood which twists the fastening to which the thread is connected. Heavy silk thread or silk yarn is made in this manner. Members are engaged exclusively in spinning silk thread or yarn.